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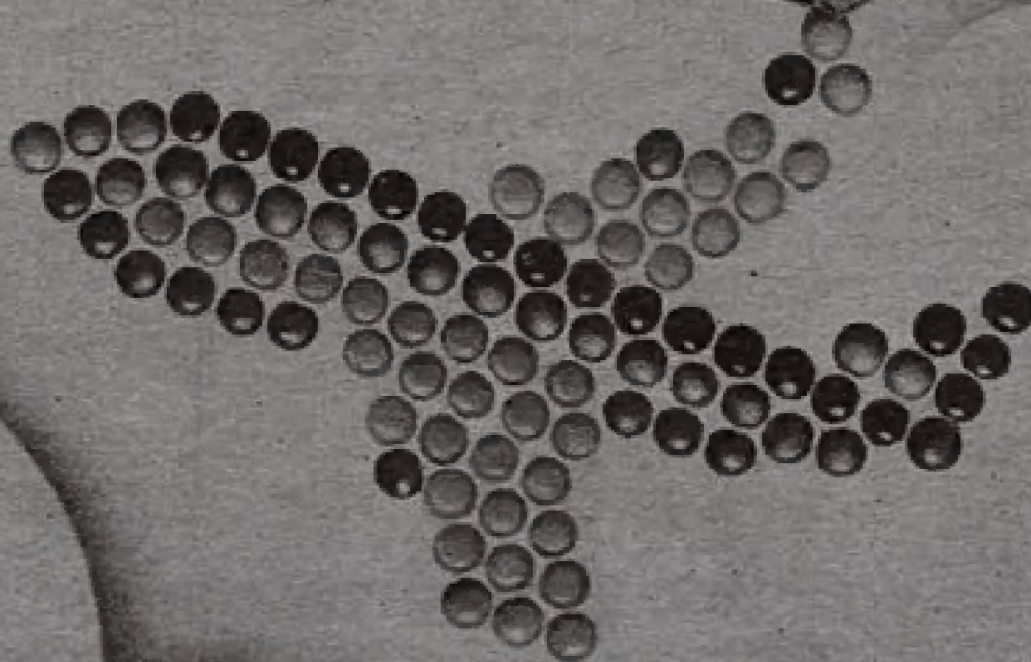
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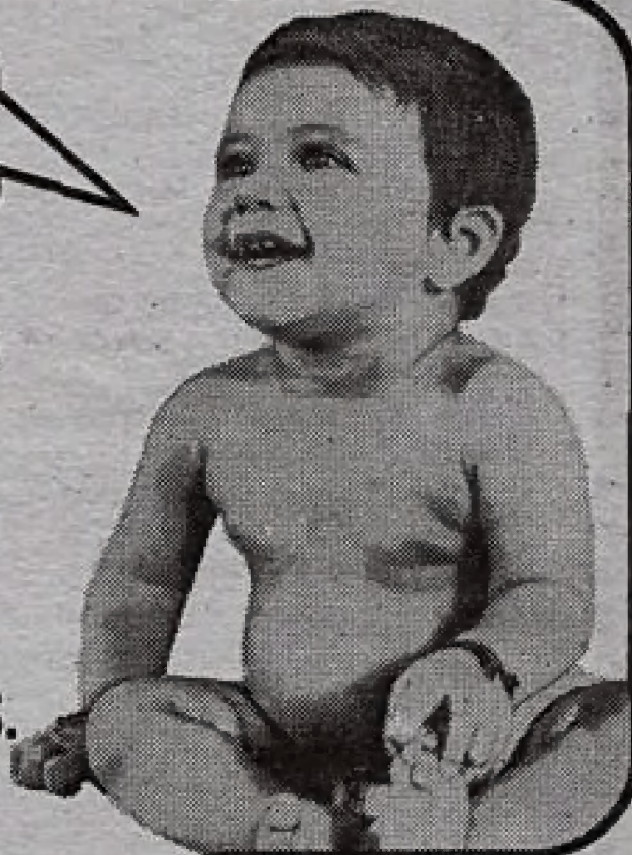
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- *Moby Dick*
- *The Prince's Destiny—A folktale*
- *A Child Triumphs Over A Scholar—A legend of India*
- *Is there a Nether World?—in Unsolved Mystries*
- *Krishna Kumari—in Story of India*

and MORE.



Printed by B.V. REDDI at Prasad Process Private Ltd., and published by B. VISWANATHA REDDI for CHANDAMAMA CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND (Prop. of Chandamama Publications), 188 Arcot Road, Madras-600 026 (India)

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A SAGA OF ADVENTURE

Man's love of adventure defies a hundred—a thousand—a million odds. Adventure has been the theme of numerous books. But all of them do not class as great literature.

Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* is a classic of adventure—and adventure in the sea. Since times immemorial the wide sea has proved most inviting as well as challenging to daring souls. *Moby Dick* is the saga of such a soul — daring into the sea and meeting the creatures of the sea, at least one of which is as adamant in its spirit as the man who confronts it!

Enjoy the thrilling story beginning in this issue—through pictures.

GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

मुखं पद्मलकारं बानी चन्दनसीतला ।
हृदयं कर्तरीतुल्यं त्रिविधं धूर्तलक्षणम् ॥
Mukham padmadalākāram vāṇī candanasītalā
Hṛdayam kartarītulyam trividham dhūrtalakṣaṇam

The three characteristics of the knave are: face blooming like a lotus; speech soothing like sandal paste—but the heart as merciless as a pair of scissors.

—*Samayochita Padyamalika*

THEIR BEST FRIENDS

(Reproduced here are the prize-winning entries for the October Contest on "My Best Friend!")

The Double Help

Mohan and I were friends since our Nursery days though he came of a wealthy family and I of a middle class. After passing the Matriculation examination, I looked for a job. I received a call from a Sugar mill, but the manager of the mill demanded a bribe of a thousand rupees. I ran to my friend. He promised to meet me with the money the next day.

He came, but with rupees ten thousand! "Start a business of your own," he said. He helped me to stand on my own legs, but, what is more, he helped me come out of a nasty situation. I was not required to bribe! I have paid back his money, but I can never pay back my debt to him on the second account.

—Pramod Chopra, Nakodar.



The Greatest Friend of All

(Although this entry does not fulfil the condition of stating any incident, prize is awarded to it as a special case, because of the idea it contains.)

Could you possibly say that some one is your best friend just because he helped you at some time or the other? In that case you have a hundred friends which is quite comforting. Think for a moment. How is it that we have so many to rely on? Here is the answer: There is One Friend whose love is radiated by your friends. My best friend, indeed, is He, for it is He who has given me those hundred friends.

—V. Krishnan, Bombay.

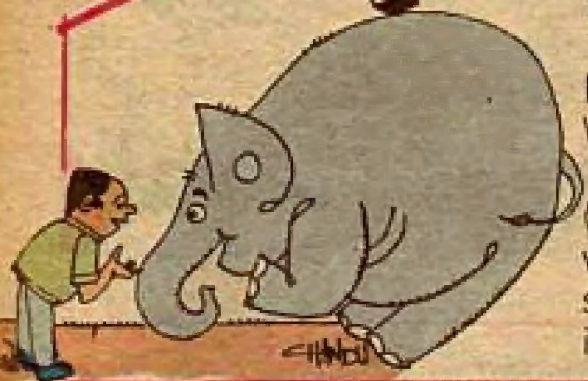
CONTEST FOR DECEMBER '83

Write in 100–150 words on the "The Memorable Match in which I played." (Please state the no. of words.) It should be a true record of your experience.

Entries should reach the Editor, Chandamama (English), 188 Arcot Road, Madras 600 026 on or before 15 December. A reward of Rs 50.00 will go to the winner. When there are more than one winner, each will receive a reward of Rs 25.00

NEWS-FLASH

The Talking Elephant

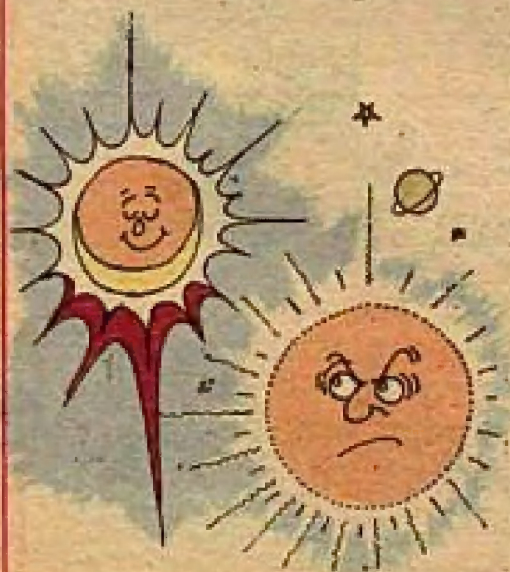


He can proudly utter his name—which is *Batyr!* What is more, he can say, "A good boy!"

This is an elephant at Karaganda Zoo (U.S.S.R.). Obviously, he does not understand what he says; he has learnt these words from spectators. He is gifted with an extraordinary imitating ability.

The Abominable Reappears

This time it is not the abominable snowman, but apeman. People of China's mountainous Hubei province have recently seen several of them—"7-foot-tall wildmen covered head to toe with brown hair." They swing through the tree-tops, eating leaves.



Turning Night into Day

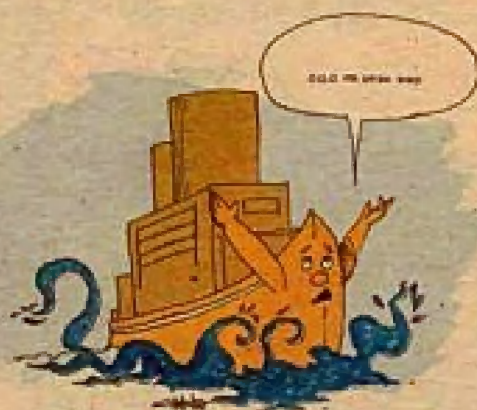
We have Sundays and Mondays; soon we may have Moondays! Christian Marchal, a scientist at the French National Office of Aerospace Study and Research, has devised a method of sending mirrors to the moon by a shuttle and getting them fixed to the moon's surface by robots. These mirrors will reflect sunrays and focus them on the earth, changing night into day, over certain areas to begin with.



LET US KNOW

We are divided in the class about the initials S.O.S. I am under the impression that it means "Save Our Souls." But the other camp insists that it means "Save Our Ship." Which is correct?

—Vrinda Bajpayee, Nasik.



None. No fullstops separate the letters—if you look into the dictionary. The dictionary will also tell you that this is just an appeal for help. This combination of letters was chosen because it is easy to remember and easy to transmit in Morse Code—three dots, three dashes, three dots.

What are the names of the 24 Jain Tirthankaras?

—H.S. Hatagine, Akol.

1. Rishabha, 2. Ajita, 3. Sambhava, 4. Abhinandana, 5. Sumati, 6. Padmaprabha, 7. Suparsva, 8. Chandraprabha, 9. Suvidhi, 10. Sitala, 11. Sreyamsa, 12. Vasupujya, 13. Vimala, 14. Ananta, 15. Dharma, 16. Santi, 17. Kunthu, 18. Ara, 19. Malli, 20. Suvrata, 21. Nami, 22. Arishtanemi, 23. Parsva, 24. Mahavira.



Krishna

—By Manoj Das

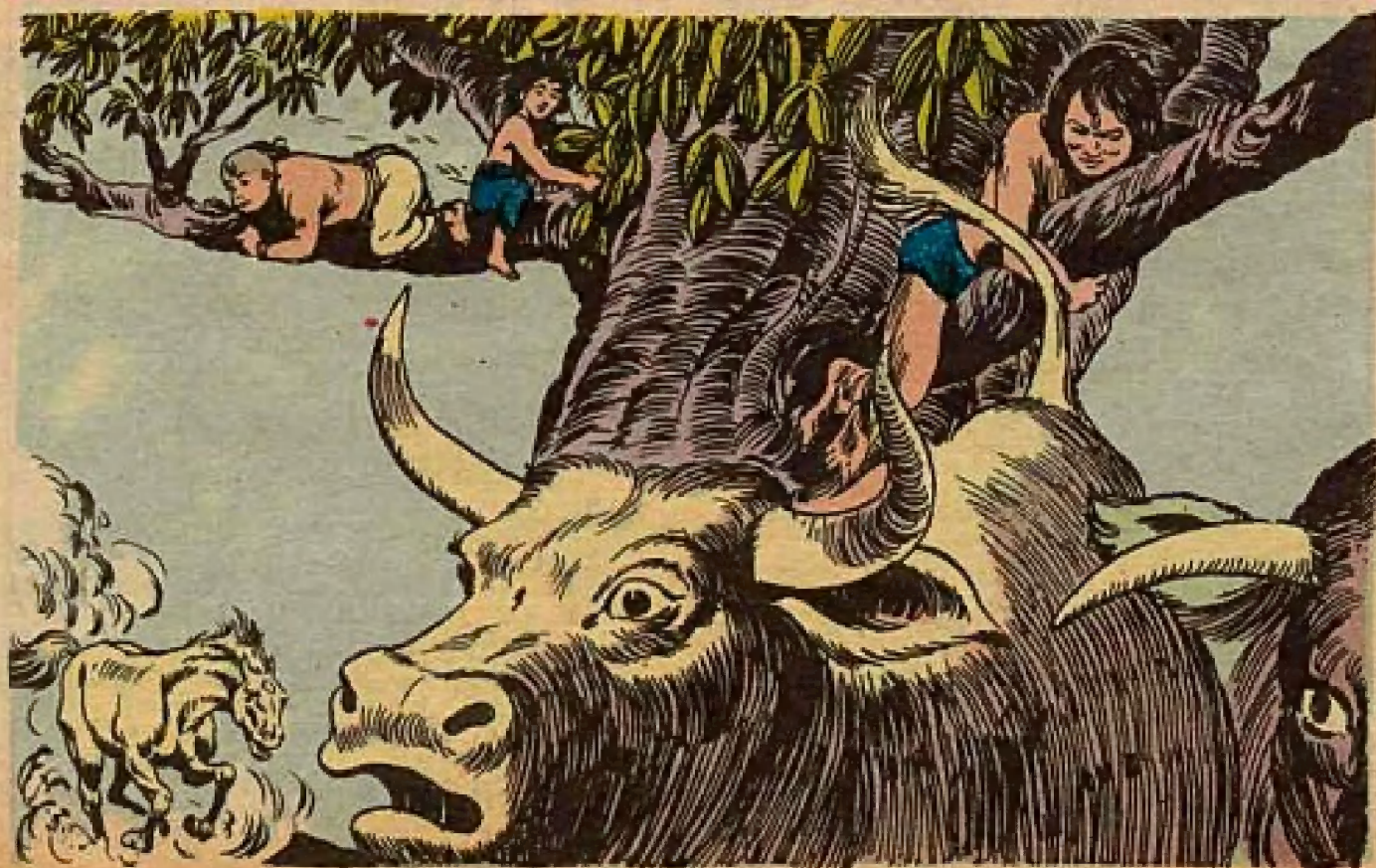
(Story so far: Unknown to Kamsa, the tyrant demon-king of Mathura, who had been foretold of his destruction by Vishnu's incarnation, Krishna, the incarnation, grew up in the family of Nanda. His surprising feats, however, soon made Kamsa suspicious of him.)

It looked like a horse, but it was terror personified. Its eyes were like glowing burning coals and it breathed fire.

As if it was made of a dozen tigers! Upon the cattle grazing peacefully in the wide field it descended like a bolt from the blue and trampled so many of them to death. The shepherds ran for their lives at its approach.

"It is a wild horse. Somehow out of some big faraway forest, it feels lost and behaves madly. Surely, it will find its way back to its home soon," said some elders.

But there was no sign of the creature's departure. The strange horse went on with its mischief. It dashed against some of the beneficent trees under which the cowherd boys relaxed





or slept and felled them as easily as a gust of wind shattered a house of cards. The boys were afraid of leading their cattle into the field.

Krishna heard of the unusual menace and also listened to the complaint of his playmates. "How can our cattle live if we cannot lead them into the fields?"

"But you must lead the cattle into the fields," said Krishna. There was magic in his voice. It was the very voice that had asked the people of Brindavan to take shelter under Mount Govardhan and disregard the torrential rain sent down by

Indra.

Soon the cattle were seen going out of the lanes of the locality into the meadow, like a rivulet emerging from the hills and growing broader in the plains.

The cowherd boys followed them, humming and whistling as usual, but their eyes went again and again over to the forest skirting the meadow. Of course, their look betrayed no fear, for did Krishna not walk amidst them?

Suddenly a green patch of the distant woods looked blurred. Yes, an upsurge of dust had done it.

"It is coming!" cried out a boy. The cattle who had already experienced the menace beforehand ran helter skelter, some of them turning back into the village.

As surely as a crack of thunder follows a string of lightning, in no time the terrible beast emerged from the cloud of dust. Its bizarre neighing would have frozen a giant to a stone, but the boys of Brindavan did not retreat. They stood, alternating their look between their Krishna and the fast-approaching terror.

Like a crashing rock the beast struck the throng. Sure enough, it had spotted Krishna and charged at him. Krishna raised his right hand as if to ward off the attack, and the ugly beast bit it at once.

Those near Krishna felt scared as they saw the beast clamping its teeth on Krishna's hand. Krishna was offering no resistance, while the horse was restless. Its hind legs kept striking the ground, digging out a pit.

Had Krishna got petrified? For a moment the boys wondered. But their suspense was soon over. The horse was seen taking backward steps. Krishna's hand still inside its mouth, all its teeth fell down like a bunch of over-ripe berries from a shaken tree.

Krishna gave a push while freeing his hand and the beast fell down like a straw horse—no longer a horse but an ogre. It was returning to its true form while dying. The cowherd boys looked amazed and aghast as the sinister looking creature breathed fire for the last time and lay still.

Nobody in Brindavan knew that the ogre named Keshi had



been employed by Kamsa to kill Krishna. New reports of Krishna's incredible feats were only strengthening Kamsa's suspicion that the boy might be the one born to destroy him. In any case, Kamsa was not prepared to let someone so powerful thrive in his neighbourhood.

Keshi's death stunned Kamsa. Now he really began to fear Krishna. His anguish was even deeper for the fact that he could not share his fear with anybody, for was it not a shame that the mighty and proud Kamsa should be afraid of a tiny tot?

However, there was one who had no parallel in cunning and



craftiness. He was an obedient soldier of Kamsa and a demon too, Vyoma by name. Kamsa despatched him to Brindavan. "Kill Krishna by any means," was his instruction to his murderous agent.

"Rest assured, I'll do more than that," Vyoma said with a chuckle.

And he planned his action according to his promise. He waited for an opportune moment when he would be able to kill not only Krishna but also all his jolly companions.

The chance came for him late one afternoon. That day the cowherd boys were engrossed in

playing hide and seek. Some acted as thieves and some as guards. The 'thieves' tried to hide from their pursuers behind bushes and rocks.

Vyoma assumed the guise of a cowered boy himself and mingled with them. He chased one after another several boys to the other side of a hillock. Once they were out of Krishna's sight, he caught hold of them and dumped them in a dark pit that looked like a cave. He kept the cave covered by a rock. None of the boys had any knowledge of that treacherous place. In their excitement nobody suspected the disguised Vyoma to be an outsider. The demon continued trapping the boys, waiting for his chance to do the same to Krishna.

Little did he know that Krishna could not only see through his game but also see through his skin! Suddenly Krishna grew aware of his wicked presence. He let himself be chased by the happy demon to the other side of the hillock. As soon as the demon shifted the rock from the mouth of the cave to push Krishna down into the pit, Krishna pounced upon him and flattened him. The demon

sprang to his feet and looked at Krishna like an angry wild boar and then jumped upon him in a bid to topple him. Both were locked in a wrestle, the demon beginning to howl fearfully.

The boys climbed out of the cave. Those who remained scattered in the meadow collected there. Surprised, they saw their Krishna fighting a creature who was growing bigger and bigger and more and more dreadful in appearance right before their eyes. His eyes were spitting fire and he was bent upon getting rid of his adversary by any brutal means and at once.

He grew to his full giant size and fell on Krishna to crush him

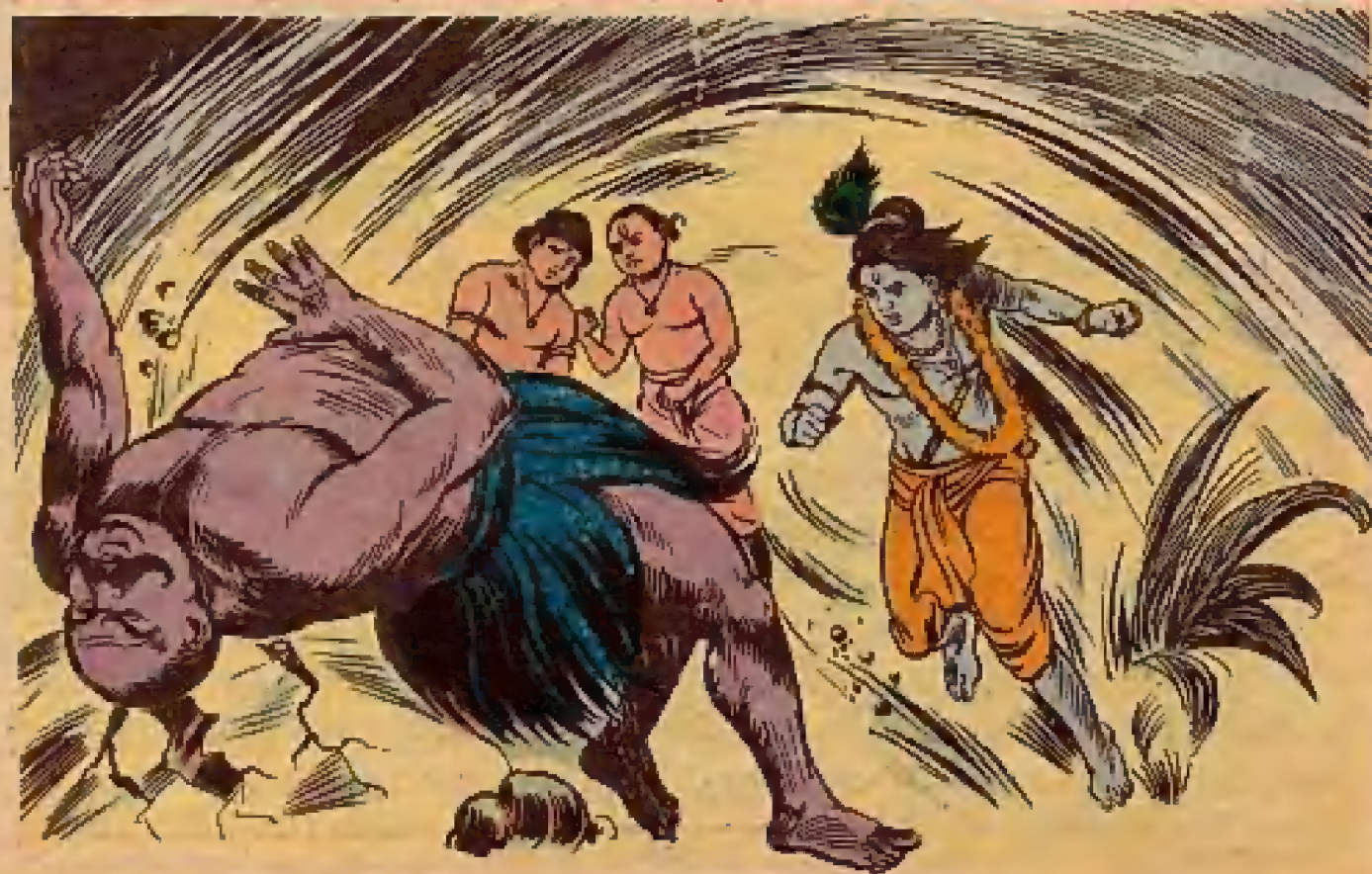
under his sheer weight.

Next moment he found himself flung up as if he was no heavier than a pebble! Yelling for the last time he came crashing down to his instant death.

Krishna returned to his friends, smiling. In silence the cowherd boys then realised that brutal strength did not necessarily triumph. There was a power far greater than that. Their Krishna exemplified that power.

Their spell of silence broke when Krishna said, "Let's gather our cattle and go!"

The cowherd boys then broke into a hullabaloo of joy.





Towards a Brighter Personality

No Sleep Till Midnight

"Did both of you sleep well? You had been allotted lower berths; am I right?" asked the professor.

"Rajesh slept like a log, but not I, at least not till an hour past midnight. I kept my eyes shut, but no sleep came. I sat up at 1'O clock and saw the third passenger in our compartment, quite an old man, still seated at Rajesh's feet. He had been assigned one of the two upper berths. The other one was vacant. I asked him, 'Will you like to lie down here? I can go up!'

'That'd be very kind of you, my child. I cannot climb,' he said.

'I suspected so,' I said, 'but why didn't you say so when you came?'

'Frankly, I felt shy. I could not have asked you because ladies often prefer the lower berth. I could not ask this boy—I suppose he is your brother—because he might think it proper

The train steamed in—on time. Grandpa Chowdhury was not required to wait long.

"What a pleasant surprise!" Rajesh exclaimed upon spotting the professor in the crowd. "Why did you take the trouble of coming all the way to the station, Grandpa?" Reena demanded plaintively.

"What is wrong in that, Reena dear? Am I not an early riser? Besides, why should I be deprived of the joy of receiving you?" The professor led his grandchildren, who were returning from their maternal uncle's house, into the car.

for him to remain close to you,' explained the gentleman. He then occupied my berth and I went up. Thereafter I slept well,' said Reena.

"Excellent!" commented the professor. "And Reena, why do you think you could not sleep till that time?"

"I don't know."

"I know. It is because something in you was feeling a bit guilty at occupying a lower berth while an aged man must climb to the upper one!"

"But, grandpa, I had never given a thought to that issue!"

"Your surface mind had not, but another part of your consciousness had! Reena, man is not just one single mind! There are many planes of consciousness in us. We are not always aware of the conflicts and cross-currents of ideas in us. You are

sensitive. When you saw the old man first, a part of your mind—the voice of your culture—must have told you that he ought to be left the lower berth. But perhaps there was no opportunity for that thought to come to the surface of your mind. It went on disturbing you and you could not sleep."

"I think you're right, grandpa," Reena sounded enthusiastic.

"But I'm happy for what you did. And your inner being too was happy when you made it possible for the old man to sleep—and it let you sleep!" said Grandpa.

"Thanks for a fine lesson in psychology, grandpa," said Rakesh, getting down and holding the car door open for the professor to emerge. They had reached home.

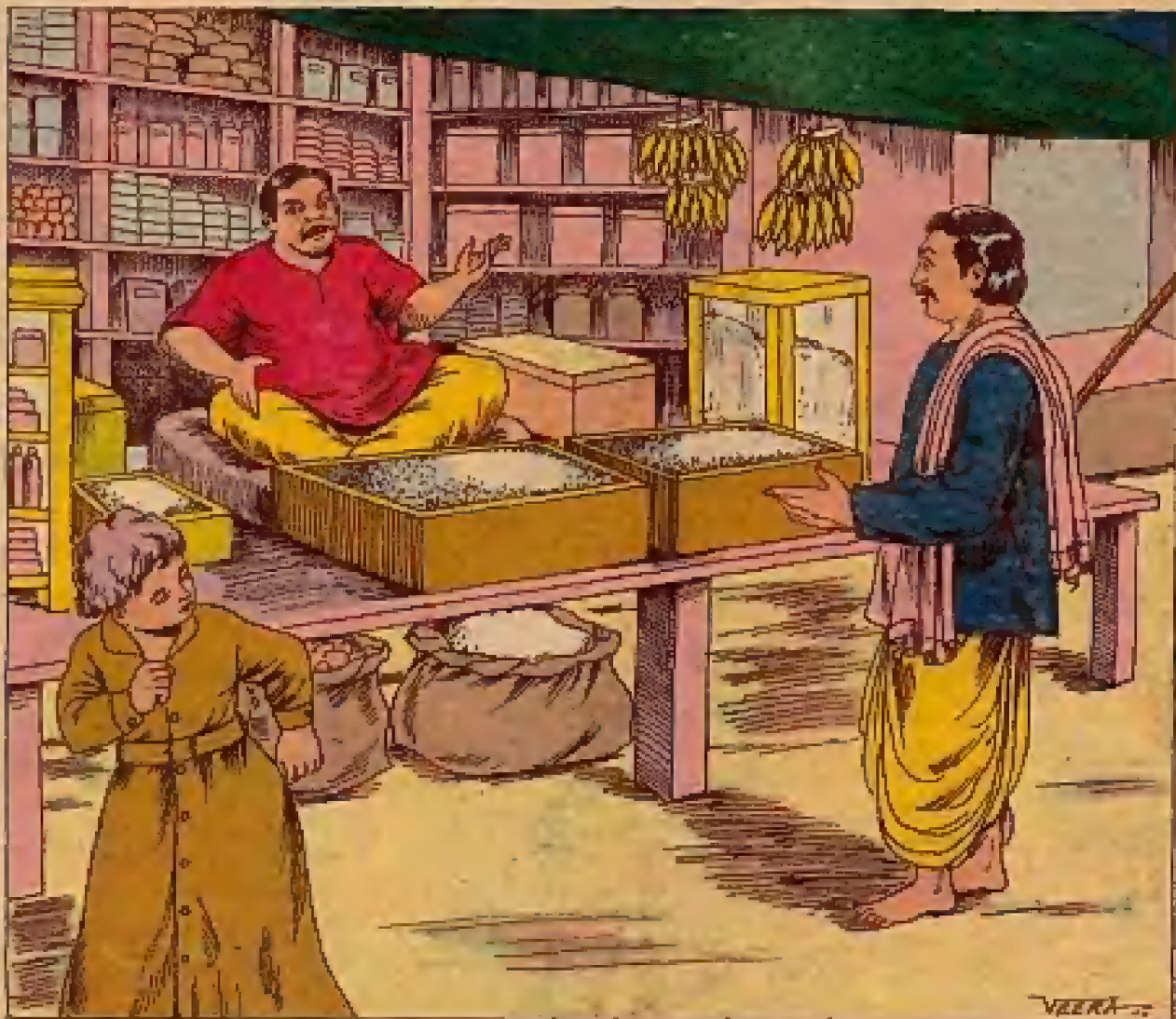


Bhuta's Concern

Bhuta the shopkeeper was one of those fellows who never did or said anything that might do good to others. So one of his customers felt happy when he heard Bhuta telling a boy who visited his shop dragging his raincoat carelessly on the floor, "Little one, hold your raincoat properly!"

"Bhuta had some concern for the boy's overcoat, after all!" thought the customer.

But as soon as the boy left, Bhuta was heard murmuring, "These fellows will wear my floor out in no time if I don't tell them!"



MOBY-DICK

(Begins this month...the thrilling story of Herman Melville's saga of the sea)

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago, having little or no money, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world. So, stuffing a shirt or two in my old carpet bag, I quit my home, and in due course arrived at New Bedford.



As it was dark when I arrived, I began to look for lodgings. After walking endlessly, it seemed, I came across a swinging sign over a door. I thought that this was the very spot for cheap lodgings.



The first thing I saw on entering the inn was a heathenish array of monstrous clubs and spears, mixed with rusty old whaling lances and harpoons. I sat down on a bench and presently the landlord came over to me. I told him I wanted a room. "The house is full," the landlord informed me. "But if you've no objections to sharing a harpooner's blanket, you can have a bed."



As there was no other choice, I allowed myself to be ushered to a small room, cold as a clam, but furnished with a prodigious bed. After the landlord had left me, I flung myself on to the bed and immediately slid off into a light doze. I was well on my way to the land of dreams when the door opened to reveal my companion for the night.

He took off his beaver hat, and I near came to singing out with surprise. There was no hair on his head—none to speak of at least—nothing but a small scalp knot. Had not the stranger stood between me and the door, I would have bolted out of it quicker than ever I bolted my dinner.



Opening the bag, he produced first a heathen idol, which he placed on the table, and then a tomahawk, a kind of axe. It was then that he suddenly became aware of my presence. "Who the devil are you?" he shouted in a harsh voice, leaping over to me with the tomahawk poised high in his hand.



"Landlord!" I shouted. "Landlord! Save me!" The Landlord must have been in the passage because he appeared at once. "Don't be afraid," he said, grinning. "Queequeg here wouldn't harm a hair of your head."

"Why didn't you tell me your infernal harpooner was a cannibal?" I shouted. "I thought you'd know it," the landlord said calmly. "Everyone knows Queequeg." He turned to the heathen who had calmly taken a pipe out which he proceeded to light. "This man sleeps here with you, sabeebeel!" "I sabeebee plenty," grunted Queequeg, puffing away at his pipe as he sat on the bed beside me.



"Goodbye, landlord," I said coldly. I turned over and went to sleep immediately. Queequeg had arisen and left the room when I awoke the next morning, but I saw him briefly, sitting in the bar, with his hat on, as I sallied out for a stroll through the streets of New Bedford. The quay I found full of wild specimens of the whaling profession. I knew that, with luck, I would soon become one of them. What I did not know was that shortly I would embark on an adventure of the most perilous nature.





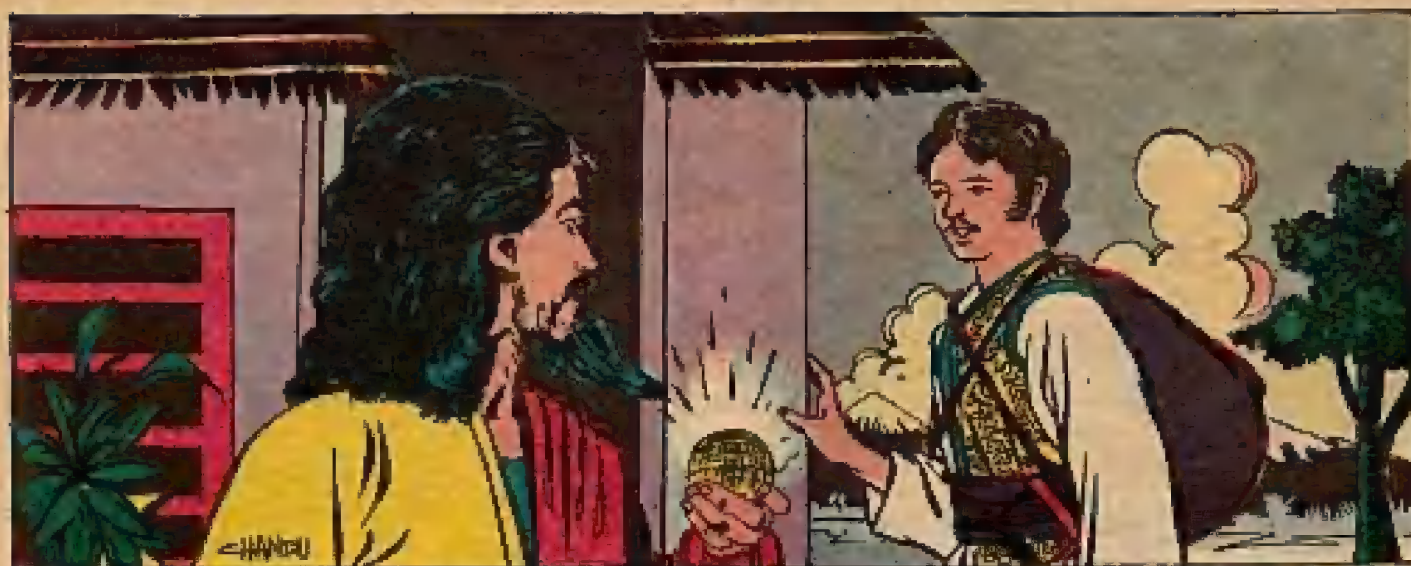
After spending much of the morning wandering round the town, I made my way to the Spouter Inn, where I found Queequeg sitting by the fire-place, whittling an idol from a piece of wood. We talked, and I was pleased when it became clear that his feelings towards me were friendly.

During our conversation he learned that I wished to go whaling. Whereupon he promptly suggested that we should sail to Nantucket, the great whaling port, where he was sure we would find ourselves a boat. We arrived there on a bleak cold morning in 1841, after a short sea voyage.



We were passing a ship named the Pequod, when suddenly acting on impulse I strode towards the gangplank. Immediately a severe looking man appeared and looked down at us, coldly. "Do you need two extra hands, Captain?" I said. "I am a seaman of some experience and my friend is a fine harpooner."

To continue



A Moldavian Fairytale

*Do you know how the morning star
and the evening star were created?*

CASTLE OF THE IMMORTALS

The young prince was as restless as the wind. Nobody could control him. He ran and romped about and giggled or laughed always!

Once, running along a lonely road with his catapult, he saw an old woman passing by with a pitcher on her head. The prince shot a stone at the pitcher and the water poured down.

"You naughty chap! You can't live in peace even if you go to the kingdom of the immortals!" commented the woman.

The kingdom of the immortals! That stirred the prince's imagination. He took some money, a change of clothes, a sword, and set out for the kingdom of the immortals.

He entered a forest and

knocked on a hermit's hut. "Do you know the way to the kingdom of the immortals?" he asked as the hermit opened the door.

"I don't know, but that doesn't matter. Take this roll of golden thread. Go on rolling it. It would extend up to the kingdom which is your destination," said the hermit handing out the roll to him. "And be kind to every beast and bird you meet on your way, if you wish to be safe."

The prince thanked him and threw the golden roll. He ran behind it as it began to unfold. A lion roared at him; he greeted it with a smile. The lion smiled back and took its eyes off him. It happened with many other



beasts.

The roll stopped near a rock. The prince was already tired. He sat down.

"Will you please remove your hand? I may get crushed," a puny voice told him at his right side. The prince at once removed his hand and saw a tiny sprout coming out of a broken shell. "Thank you, young man, I was struggling to come out for the last three days, but was unable to break open the hard shell. As you pressed your hand, the shell broke. I'll grow into a big tree and, maybe, give you shade!"

"Ha!" laughed the prince. "It

will be a long time before you grow up sufficiently to give shade to anyone. I may not live till then. But I must be off now," he said. But he did not begin unrolling the golden thread-ball before making the earth soft for the sprout and sprinkling a drop or two of water on it.

He had walked for another day when he saw a huge eagle flapping its wings to rise from a hillock, but unable to do so as it was wounded.

"Don't—don't come near me, don't harm me," shrieked the eagle.

"I have no intention of harming you," said the prince. He went near the eagle and saw its wound and poured on it the sap of a medicinal plant. "You will get well soon," he said.

"Thanks. And if you ever remember me, I'll be with you at once," said the eagle.

The prince went on and on and soon he was near the sea. The tide had just receded. A large golden fish lay stuck in a pool of mud. As the prince stopped to look at the fish, it said, "Don't harm me. I'm the king of the fish world."

"I would rather help you to go

back into the water." The prince pushed the fish out the mud. Next moment a huge wave broke on it and carried it away. The fish raised its head on the crest of the wave and said, "I'll not forget your kindness. Remember me and I'll be with you."

The prince rolled the thread-ball once again. Once more it entered a forest. Soon the prince saw a butterfly caught in a spider's web. "Will you please release me from this? I'll serve you in future!" it said to the prince.

The prince released it from the web with the tip of his sword and the butterfly fluttered by!

Another throw of the thread ball and it unrolled and unrolled till it came to its end. Well, the end reached the gate of a charming castle. Behind the castle the sea roared and splashed against its wall.

The prince banged on the gate. "What do you want?" asked a big man.

"I'm looking for the kingdom of the immortals!" answered the eager prince.

"This is the kingdom and I'm the king. But how can you come in unless you agree to marry my



daughter?" asked the king.

"To be honest, I don't mind marrying her if she is reasonably good-looking!" said the prince.

The king called out for his daughter. She emerged on the roof. She was very beautiful.

"Now, young man, you cannot marry her unless you pass a test," said the king.

"I can try. What is the test?"

"You must hide. If you are found out, you shall die! I give you ten minutes."

The king and the prince withdrew. The prince stood thoughtful for a moment. Suddenly he remembered the eagle. Out of the clouds it came and



descended before him. The prince told it his problem.

"Sit on my back," said the eagle. It then flew and shot up into the clouds. It threw the prince into a dense dark cloud and said, "Wait here till I take you back."

Ten minutes later the king called out his daughter and said, "Find out and behead the prince!"

The princess looked into the meadow and did not see the prince. She looked into the sea and did not see him. But as she looked up, she saw him.

"Come down, you're found out!" shouted the king. The sad

eagle brought the prince down.

"Father, one failure does not suffice for his death," said the princess.

"All right. We will try him again," said the king and he allowed another chance to the prince to hide.

The prince remembered the king-fish. It emerged from the waters and took the prince away into the sea.

The princess could see through the water just as she could see through the clouds.

"Father, two failures do not earn him death!" said the princess pleadingly.

"Very well, I'll give him one more chance," said the king.

The prince remembered the butterfly. It came at once and whispered in his ears to come away into the garden. As soon as the prince did that, the butterfly circled round his head thrice and the prince turned into a butterfly himself.

When the princess came out, the prince, now a butterfly, sat down on the flowers adorning her look and she did not notice it.

However keenly she looked here and there, she could not find him.

"Father, I fail to locate him," she said at last.

Next moment the butterfly left her lock and turned into the prince he was and sprang up before her.

The princess blushed and the king smiled.

The princess was married to the prince, and the prince was ushered into the castle.

The prince lived so happily that it will take a volume to describe his happiness. Days passed. Once in a while the king repeated a single advice: "Never go out of the gate through which you had entered our castle."

One day the prince, while roaming in the garden, shot his arrow at a strange bird.

The bird disappeared from his sight. In his eagerness to see what happened to it, he dashed out of the very gate through which he had entered. His eyes fell on the golden thread that had led him there. At once the memory of his parents and his palace and his native town overwhelmed him. Without looking back he ran along it. When tired, he slowed down and walked. It took him days to reach the other end of the



thread. But where was his palace? Where were his kinsfolk? Nothing seemed familiar to him.

He saw a huge heap of stones covered by bushes and grass, where he hoped to see his palace. "I came by a wrong way," he thought and then decided to return to the kingdom of the immortals.

After two days of walking he felt tired and he sat down under a huge tree.

"Hello, how happy I am to give you shade!" said the tree. The prince looked at it, astonished.

"Don't you remember me?"

asked the tree. "Once you helped me come out of a little shell. That was two hundred years ago!"

The prince now understood the mystery of his inability to locate his palace. Two hundred years had passed like two years when he lived in the kingdom of the immortals!

He got up and began to walk.

"So, I've got you at last!" shouted a dark but dignified figure. "I'm Death. You were to die long ago, but you were beyond my reach!" said the dark being and he extended his fearful hand to catch the prince.

The prince ran and ran. The being of Death gave him a hot chase. At last the prince was able to reach the castle of the kingdom of the immortals. As he banged on the door, the king opened it. The being of Death

had just reached him. The king took hold of the arms of the prince and the being of Death took hold of his legs.

The princess came out and, by the help of the magic, turned her husband into a golden apple and, before the being of Death could interfere, hurled the apple into the sky.

The king turned his daughter into another apple and hurled it into the sky too, telling her, "Find out your husband and return with him."

Since then the prince is seen in the sky as the evening star and the princess as the morning star.

They are yet to come together.

In course of time the king became a mountain. He keeps on observing the morning star and the evening star.



The Perfect Match

Is there any perfectly matched couple in my kingdom?" The king, in one of his leisurely and light moods, threw this question at his courtiers.

"Vipuldas and his wife, I believe, make the most perfect couple, entirely made for each other," said the court-jester.

"Vipuldas? The name sounds familiar. Haven't I heard of him in some other context?" asked the king.

"You have, my lord. He is the greatest miser in our kingdom.

Well, there are misers and misers. Sometimes if the husband is a miser, the wife is not. When the wife is a miser, the husband is not. Even when both the husband and the wife are misers, still there may be a difference in degrees of miserliness between them. But Vipuldas and his wife are a perfect match," asserted the jester.

The king nodded, looking quite amused.

A few days passed. One week end he told his jester, "I'm in a mood to pay a visit to Vipuldas.



Will you accompany me?"

"Most willingly, my lord," said the jester.

The king dressed up like a commoner. The jester also put on a false moustache so that nobody recognised him.

It was evening when the two reached the small house of Vipuldas situated in a corner of the town. They peeped in and paid attention to the conversation going on inside and understood that Vipuldas's wife was seriously ill. Vipuldas was going to call a physician who charged the minimum fee though he lived in a village miles away.

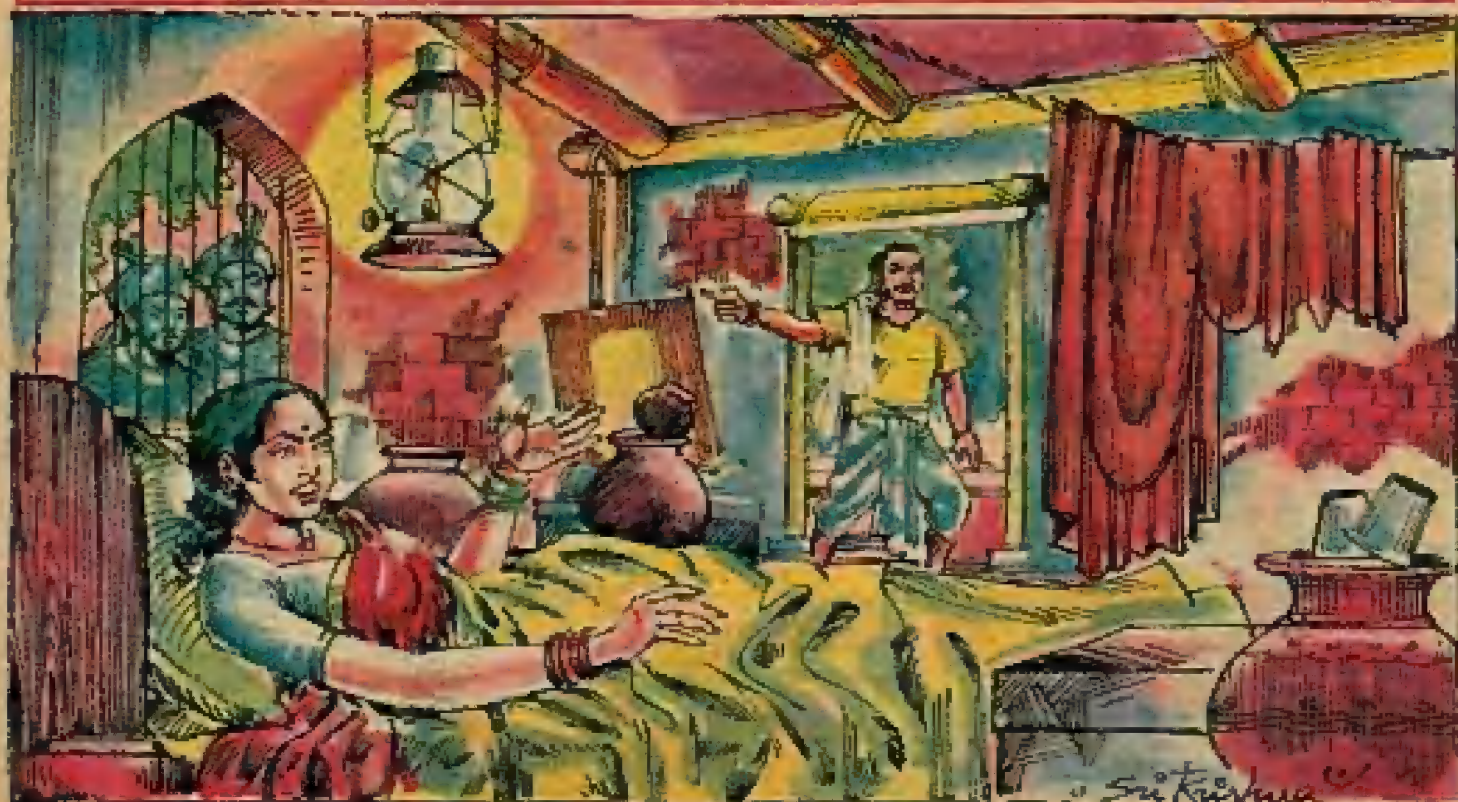
"When you return with the physician, ask him to wait outside and you come in and see

whether I'm alive or dead. If you find me dead, you can ask the physician to go back. You won't have to pay him for examining me!" advised the wife.

"That should be the wise thing to do," agreed Vipuldas. Then, before stepping out, he turned to his wife and said, "Listen, wife, if you feel that you are dying, then remember to blow out the lamp. No use keeping it burning till I return with the physician!"

"I will do so," said the wife in her feeble voice.

The king gave a shake to his jester and said in a whisper, "I have seen the perfect match in my kingdom—maybe in the whole world!"



The New Teacher

In the small town there was a school and the new teacher was very proud of his own talent. He considered himself talented not only in the art of teaching, but also in the science of disciplining the students. "I'll make them examples in obedience! The world will praise me as the most successful teacher," he told himself and told also some of his dear

friends.

If a student came a bit late, he was thrashed. If he was found looking at the streets or the trees, he received twenty lashes. If anybody sneezed, all were to stand up with their arms crossed



and say in a chorus, "Allah have mercy on us!" Any student who failed to join the chorus was whipped hard.

One or two elderly friends of the teacher warned him against such rigidity. "It is going a bit too far," they said. But the teacher laughed at their comments. Most of the people in the town praised him "What a wonderful guy we have as our new teacher! He will make a race of angels of our kids!" they said, sometimes in the teacher's hearing. The teacher felt very proud.

Once a year the students had to be taken out for picnic. The new teacher took them out to a meadow a little far from the

town. It is difficult to say how much the boys enjoyed their picnic under the teacher's stern stare, but their return-journey began at noon.

The sky was without a shred of cloud and the heat was oppressive. The children complained of thirst. They had a bucket with them, but the water they had carried had been finished.

"Here is an old well. A rope too is here. We will draw water in no time," said the teacher. He lowered the bucket, but it struck against a stone. It was an abandoned well. A part of its wall had collapsed covering the water.



"I'll go down and fill the bucket with water," he said. He tied one end of the rope round his own waist. Then he was lowered, the students holding the rope tightly and releasing it only bit by bit, very slowly.

He reached the bottom and saw a slab covering the water. he removed it and then untied himself. The students pulled the rope and tied the bucket to it. The bucket was lowered and the teacher filled it with water. Then he asked the students to pull up the bucket.

Twice more he filled up the bucket. All the students quenched their thirst. Then the rope was lowered for the last time and he tied its end to his waist.

The students began to pull him up.

He had almost reached the mouth of the well when suddenly one of the students sneezed. At once those who held the rope left it and crossed their arms and said in a chorus, "Allah have mercy on us!"

By the time they realised what happened to their teacher, he had fallen on the floor and broken his back.

He cried and the panicky students cried too. Some passersby rescued the unlucky teacher. It was too late for him to realise how harmful his rigidity with rules could be!



Reputedly a ferocious animal, the water buffalo enjoys nothing better than idling the day away in a pool of warm water!

Which is the most dangerous of all animals? The tiger? Or, perhaps, the bear? These animals are immensely strong. Either can kill a man with one shattering blow of the paw.

But there is one animal which even the fiercest of tigers avoids. This is the Indian buffalo, or water buffalo, said to be the most ferocious member of the animal kingdom when it feels itself threatened.

Standing nearly two metres at the shoulders, water buffaloes are heavily built and have long, widely separated horns.

Quick-tempered, they roam in herds of 50 or more through the jungles and plains of India and are often seen in swampy marshes where they wallow happily in the mud.

Wild buffaloes love the marshy jungles and forests. They feed in the morning and evening and lie hidden during the rest of the day chewing the cud. A more terrifying spectacle than a herd of these huge beasts with their glaring eyes, when they leave their swamps and plunge through the jungle, can hardly be imagined.

For very many centuries, the water buffalo has been tamed. Millions of them are at work in India and over a million in the Philippines. Because they are happy in wet conditions, they are much used in the rice fields.

Other cattle in the East are dwarfed beside the huge water buffalo, which is often used as a beast of burden. However, its usefulness is hampered by its liking for water. It will make a dash for any pool or stream it sees when it is being driven along the road, and plunge with its load into the water.

Water Refuge

In fact, the buffalo likes nothing better than to lie in the water, to help to avoid the flies as well as to cool off.

In West and East Africa there are several species of buffalo, the biggest being in East Africa. This buffalo has widespread horns over a metre across. As a contrast, the smallest buffalo is in Celebes, an island in Indonesia. It

NATURE'S KINGDOM

THE BUFFALO THAT LOVES A BATH

stands a metre at the shoulder and is black all over.

Mightiest and most dangerous of them all is the Cape Buffalo, solitary bulls or small wandering herds that once roamed at will in the reedy swamps and open bush of South Africa.

The Cape buffalo is a sturdy animal with big, hairy ears and a huge pair of horns ending in sharp, pointed tips. At the base, the horns are very wide and flat, almost meeting in the centre of the forehead. They form a hard horny helmet which no hunter's bullet can penetrate and is capable of protecting the animal's head from the teeth and claws of other animals.

So powerful is the Cape buffalo that it has no fear of man or beast. With a furious bellow, it will dash from its cover and charge full tilt at any hunter; and it will fight two or three lions together.

The lion is too wise to attack a full-grown bull-buffalo, although it will follow a herd and pull down a sickly cow or carry off a calf that has strayed too far from its mother.

Often, however, the lion is disappointed, for when a lion is prowling about, the cows will surround their calves and guard them all night long.

Every time it tries to break through that watchful ring, the lion is faced by such a terrifying array of horned heads that it is forced to abandon its enterprise and slink off supperless to its lair.

Once the danger has passed, the buffaloes will return to their favourite activity of idling the long day away by relaxing in a pool of warm, oozing mud or dozing in the soothing waters of a tropical pool.



A House For Spirits

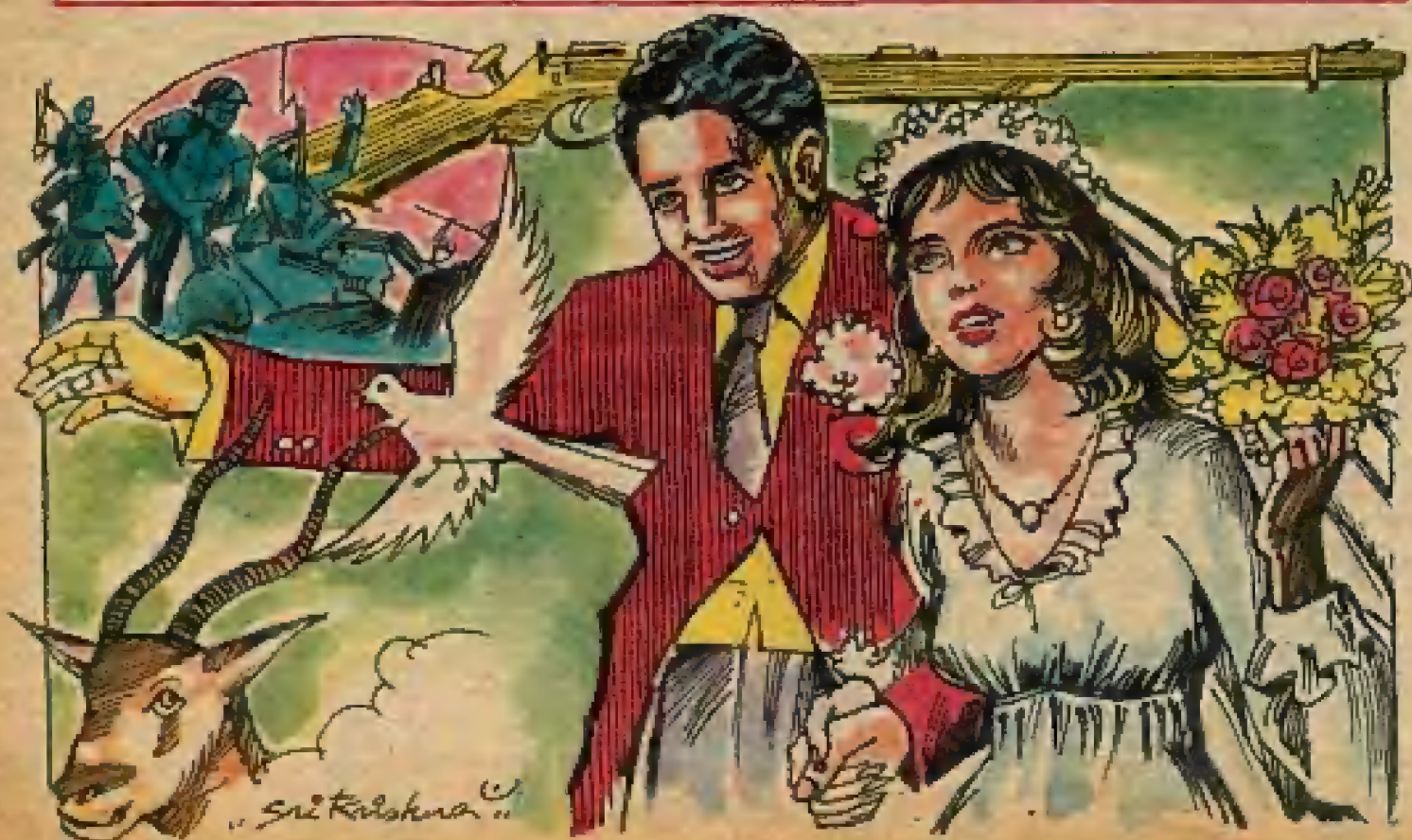
There stands a desolate building containing scores of rooms—but never the number is determined!

Have you heard of the Winchester rifle? This was the gun that served as the most important weapon during the American Civil War. And till the beginning of this century this was the gun that had killed the maximum number of soldiers as well as wild animals and birds in America.

There was nothing surprising in the fact that those who owned the factory that turned out these weapons were among the richest people in America.

Nobody in New Haven, Connecticut, was surprised when the young scion of the house of Winchester, William, married the most charming and smart girl in the city, Sarah, in 1866. It was a desirable match and the people looked forward to a long happy married life of the couple.

Sarah gave birth to a lovely daughter. The family, the relatives and the business concern went festive. But the baby girl never thrived; it withered away



and died.

Sarah was shocked. But imagine her sorrow when, rather suddenly, her husband died in a few years!

Sarah Winchester was very rich, but hers was a sorrow that wealth could not eradicate. Why misfortune struck her again and again? She was bent upon finding an answer to the question.

The answer was given by a woman of Boston who was a mystic: There was a terrible curse on her family. It was because they produced a weapon that had killed thousands of people! The curse had struck her child and her husband dead; it will also strike her dead in the near future! The spirits of the dead were always after her.

"Is there no way to stop them pursuing me?" asked the distraught Sarah.

The mystic asked her to cut off her connection with the weapon-manufacturing factory and to move to a faraway place and begin building a house consecrated to the spirits of those who had fallen to the Winchester rifles. Yes—to begin building the house, but never to end it. If she ended it, she shall fall



dead!

Sarah Winchester moved away to San Jose, California, in 1884 and bought a plot of land more than a hundred and sixty acres in area. Then began the construction of a house—rather expansion of an old house that was already there.

Day after day and for years she built on, adding rooms, staircases, fireplaces and new wings to the building. There were steps leading nowhere, dungeons serving no purpose, windows overlooking nothing but dark nooks.

Sarah Winchester had nothing else to do but remain

engrossed in the never-ending construction of the house. A weird inspiration made her continuously alter or add to the plan. Every night, at the stroke of 12, she entered a particular room and nobody knew what she did. People thought that she invoked the spirits of the dead. All those who were participating in the construction of the house became a community that remained aloof from the society. They looked rather strange and abnormal to others.

At last, one morning in 1922, the old Sarah died. Some people say that she had stopped constructing any new wing deliberately. Perhaps she had the message that it was time for her normal death; the spirits were

no longer after her.

The desolate house stands to this day as a tourist attraction. Those who brave passing a night inside it say that they hear music or voices that cannot be explained.

But what is intriguing is, it has not been possible to ascertain the number of rooms the building contains. Everytime a count is made, the number is different—157 or 160 or 162 or something else.

The caretakers say that the exact number is a secret that is guarded only by its legitimate occupants—the spirits. The day the exact number can be determined, the spirits would be obliged to leave the house!





*New Tales of King
and the Vampire*

The Prince's Triumph

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Roars of thunder subdued the moaning of jackals, hyenas and the eerie laughter of ghosts. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse observed, "O King, I know not what is it that enthuses you to carry on this mission at this unearthly hour. Sometimes people undertake works without realising how difficult they might prove. Take the case of Subir. Well, let me narrate his story to you. That might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: Sursen, the prince of Bhadragiri, excelled all in wrestling, archery and



fencing. He was a good-natured young man, but he was ambitious. It was his desire to be known as the unrivalled hero of his time.

One day a wandering sage became a guest in the palace. He witnessed Sursen's heroic feats and blessed him. Sursen asked him, "Sir, you travel in many lands. Do you know of anyone who could prove stronger than I?"

The sage thought for a while and then said, "I'm not sure, but I think Subir might be superior to you."

On enquiry Prince Sursen learnt that Subir belonged to his

own kingdom. He lived in a distant village and never tried to prove his merit before anybody.

Next day the prince donned the clothes of an ordinary traveller and reached Subir's village. Subir was away in the forest. The prince talked to the villagers and was amused to gather that Subir was exceptionally brave and heroic indeed! Villagers told him how, once when the village was raided by brigands and the terrified villagers kept indoors, Subir alone dared them to fight him and like a ferocious bull pushed them into the temple and locked them up. The king's guards were informed. They arrested and took away the brigands.

Another time a tiger pounced upon Subir. He threw the beast down and bound its legs and carried it to his village to amuse the people.

But Subir was always shy to publicise his strength and achievements. He did not easily come forward to try his strength with anybody. Only his own village-folk knew his qualities.

Prince Sursen hit upon a way to fight him. At night he entered Subir's house and tumbled his utensils. It appeared as if he was a thief who accidentally made

that sound.

Subir woke up and found him and asked him to surrender. But the prince attacked him. Subir was obliged to wrestle with him. In two minutes the prince became a prisoner in Subir's hand.

"To steal is bad. It is also risky. Why did you take to such a life?" Subir asked the prince.

The prince laughed and said, "I'm no thief. I just wanted to try my strength with you."

"I see. Now that your wish is fulfilled, you should work and live like an honest man," said Subir.

The prince, who was eager to see more of Subir, asked, "Can

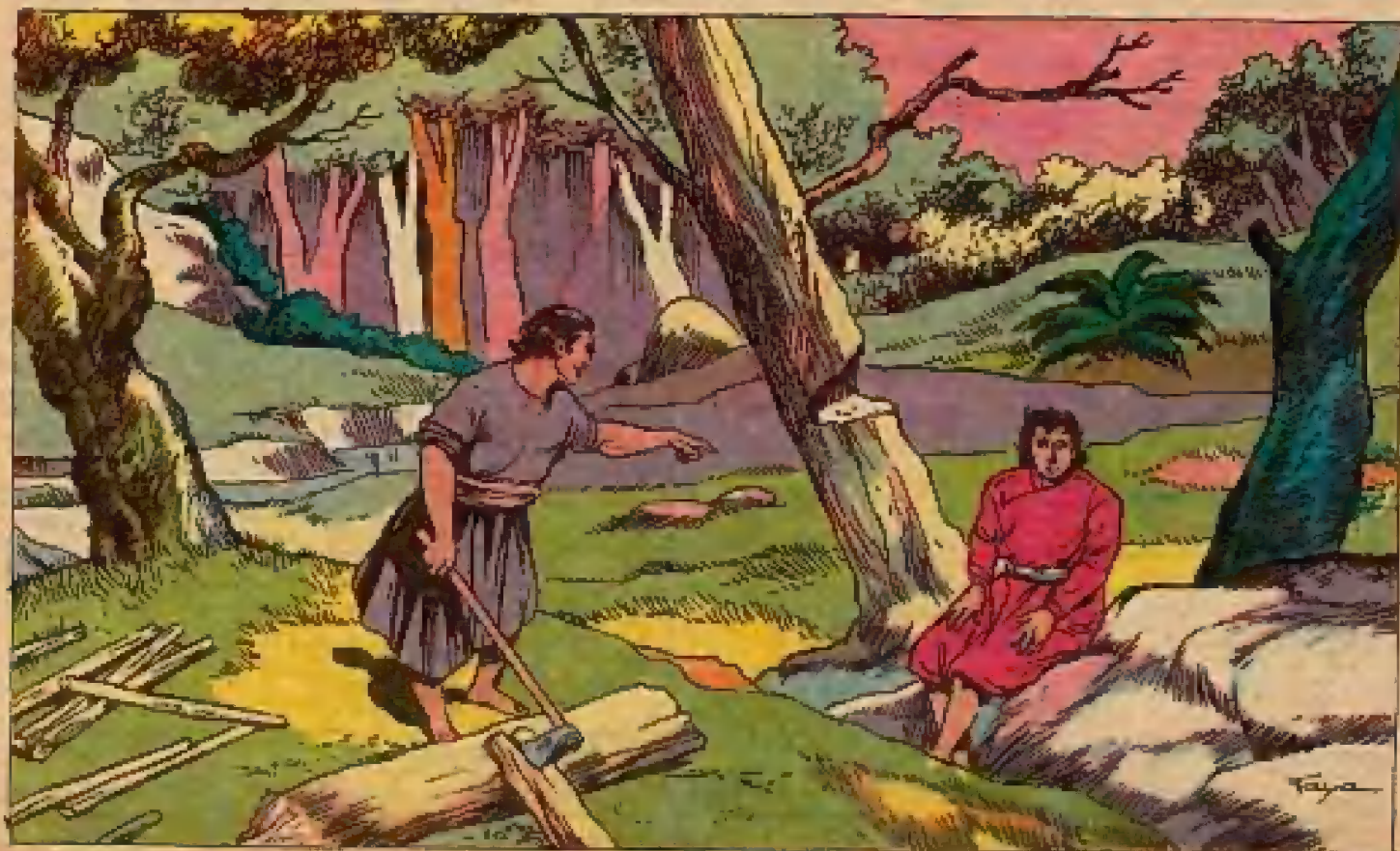
you give me any work?"

"Very well, come with me to the forest for felling trees," said Subir.

The prince agreed and followed Subir into the forest. Subir showed him a tree and gave him an axe.

After an hour the prince threw away the axe and sat down on the grass. He had succeeded cutting only half of the trunk of the tree till then while Subir had felled two trees.

"Subir, you are really heroic!" the prince observed. "I was under the impression that there is nobody in this kingdom to excel me in strength. How





wrong I was!"

Do not feel diffident. I could capture you at night because you were doing something wrong and so you must be already feeling guilty. Now you feel tired because you are not in the habit of felling trees. Who knows if you cannot grow into the greatest hero?" said Subir affectionately.

The prince was quite inspired. After a little while he asked Subir, "Is it true that you never challenge anybody to a combat?"

"I don't. Once in a while if I see somebody bragging about his valour and prowess, I may

try to humble him. But that happens rarely."

"I challenge you to a combat. I'm sure, I can defeat you," said the prince.

"You cannot provoke me," said Subir smilingly. "Your bragging will cause no harm to others, because you have no power to harm anybody."

"Only if you knew who I am!" said the prince. As Subir looked at him with some surprise, the prince divulged his identity and challenged Subir once again to a combat.

Subir was happy to meet the prince. He accepted the challenge. They wrestled and the prince was defeated.

"I do not accept defeat. I still say that I can defeat you if you fight me in our capital," asserted the prince.

Subir accepted the challenge willy-nilly.

They reached the royal palace. Subir was treated like an important guest and lodged in the royal guest-house. The prince spoke high of him and arranged for several contests in fencing, archery and wrestling between Subir and a number of well-known heroes in the army. Subir defeated all.

At last there were combats

between the prince and Subir. The nobility and the crowd applauded both. But when they were asked to give their opinion, they said that the prince was a degree superior to Subir.

When it was time for Subir to return to his village, the prince told him privately, "My friend, I know and you know that you are far superior to me in strength and skill. The judgment passed by our nobility has no meaning for us!"

Subir smiled and departed.

The vampire paused for a moment and then demanded of the king in a challenging tone, "If Subir was really stronger than the prince, how did the prince prove himself superior to him? Did the prince take recourse to some trick? Answer me if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of

the answer, your head would roll off your neck."

Forthwith replied King Vikram, "People are often guided by their impressions. In the royal court nobody knew Subir while everybody knew the prince to be their champion fighter. They took it for granted that the prince was better than Subir. Also, we should not ignore the fact that before fighting with the prince, Subir had to fight a number of other heroes. His strength must have been exhausted to a degree. Besides Subir was at his best in his own environment—he was not accustomed to the capital and the court. He must have felt like a fish out of water!"

No sooner had King Vikram concluded his answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.



A Folktale from China

The Clever Thief

Chung had just arrived in the town. Looking at the townsfolk, who were always busy, he thought he can carry on his business with ease.

What was his business? Well, he was a petty village thief.

Soon the glittering bell on a tower attracted his attention. "This is outside the house and is a costly thing. I can steal it when it is dark!" he thought. But the problem was, it would make sound the moment one touched it.

An idea came to him in a flash. He stuffed both his ears with pieces of cloth. "There will be no sound now!" he assured himself and climbed to the tower and tried to remove the bell.

Chung was really surprised when he was caught!





A Moldavian Fairytale

*Do you know how the morning star
and the evening star were created?*

CASTLE OF THE IMMORTALS

The young prince was as restless as the wind. Nobody could control him. He ran and romped about and giggled or laughed always!

Once, running along a lonely road with his catapult, he saw an old woman passing by with a pitcher on her head. The prince shot a stone at the pitcher and the water poured down.

"You naughty chap! You can't live in peace even if you go to the kingdom of the immortals!" commented the woman.

The kingdom of the immortals! That stirred the prince's imagination. He took some money, a change of clothes, a sword, and set out for the kingdom of the immortals.

He entered a forest and

knocked on a hermit's hut. "Do you know the way to the kingdom of the immortals?" he asked as the hermit opened the door.

"I don't know, but that doesn't matter. Take this roll of golden thread. Go on rolling it. It would extend up to the kingdom which is your destination," said the hermit handing out the roll to him. "And be kind to every beast and bird you meet on your way, if you wish to be safe."

The prince thanked him and threw the golden roll. He ran behind it as it began to unfold. A lion roared at him; he greeted it with a smile. The lion smiled back and took its eyes off him. It happened with many other



beasts.

The roll stopped near a rock. The prince was already tired. He sat down.

"Will you please remove your hand? I may get crushed," a puny voice told him at his right side. The prince at once removed his hand and saw a tiny sprout coming out of a broken shell. "Thank you, young man, I was struggling to come out for the last three days, but was unable to break open the hard shell. As you pressed your hand, the shell broke. I'll grow into a big tree and, maybe, give you shade!"

"Ha!" laughed the prince. "It

will be a long time before you grow up sufficiently to give shade to anyone. I may not live till then. But I must be off now," he said. But he did not begin unrolling the golden thread-ball before making the earth soft for the sprout and sprinkling a drop or two of water on it.

He had walked for another day when he saw a huge eagle flapping its wings to rise from a hillock, but unable to do so as it was wounded.

"Don't—don't come near me, don't harm me," shrieked the eagle.

"I have no intention of harming you," said the prince. He went near the eagle and saw its wound and poured on it the sap of a medicinal plant. "You will get well soon," he said.

"Thanks. And if you ever remember me, I'll be with you at once," said the eagle.

The prince went on and on and soon he was near the sea. The tide had just receded. A large golden fish lay stuck in a pool of mud. As the prince stopped to look at the fish, it said, "Don't harm me. I'm the king of the fish world."

"I would rather help you to go



The Old Disease Cured

There was only one shop in the village Sudampur. All the daily needs of the villagers were readily available there, but not a single item was free from adulteration.

Visu, the shop-keeper, was not only dishonest but also discourteous. The villagers were obliged to tolerate him because there was no second shop in the locality.

One day a stranger stepped into the shop, observed the items on sale and bought a thing or two. He examined them and told Visu, "Gentleman, are you specialising in selling adulterated things only? Can you give me samples of some pure items?"

"What? What did you say? Pure? What a pure fellow you are! Have you seen your face in a mirror recently? Do you see

the clothes you are wearing? You are hardly better than a pig. You have spoilt the purity of my shop by entering it!" shouted Visu.

The stranger had not expected such a tirade from the shopkeeper. Taken aback, he stood in silence. That encouraged Visu to step forward and to shout even at a higher pitch of his voice, "Had anybody in your past fourteen generations distinguished a pure thing from impure? You are lucky that my son-in-law is not here. He would have thrashed you down to pulp! Get out!"

The stranger quietly went out and reached the village chief's house. "Do you recognise me?" he asked the chief. From his voice and smile the chief understood that he was none other than the king's chief-minister—



out for a round of the kingdom without letting himself be known.

The chief hurriedly drew a chair and offered it to the important guest. The minister took seat and asked with some annoyance, "Why has the king put you in the chief's chair? Is it not your duty to protect the villagers from unscrupulous people? Visu, the shop-keeper, is not only dishonest, but also rude! Have you ever taken him to task?"

"Sir, it is true that Visu is no better than a monkey so far as behaviour is concerned. But he does not adulterate things him-

self. The trader who supplies him the goods is an adulterator. I will warn him now—in your presence. Kindly bear with me a little, sir!" the chief said imploringly. He sent for Visu immediately.

"I don't think Visu will learn anything from a warning. Punishment alone will teach him to behave!" said the minister.

The chief's messenger informed Visu of the situation. Visu came running and straightway lay prostrate before the minister. Beating his forehead on the minister's feet, he said in a whimper, "I'm a sinner, a pig, a monkey, a fool, an imp, sir. Whip me hard, sir, whip me hard! If the whip breaks, I'll pay for it, sir!"

The minister's mood softened. "Get up," he commanded. "I pardon you your impudent behaviour towards me. But you ought to be punished for your corrupt practices."

"Pardon this sinner, noble sir!" cried Visu.

"Who am I to pardon you? Those who have suffered from your practices are the villagers. I won't punish you if they pardon you!" said the minister. He then asked Visu to go away and

instructed the chief to call the villagers to gather at a place late in the afternoon. Visu too was to be present.

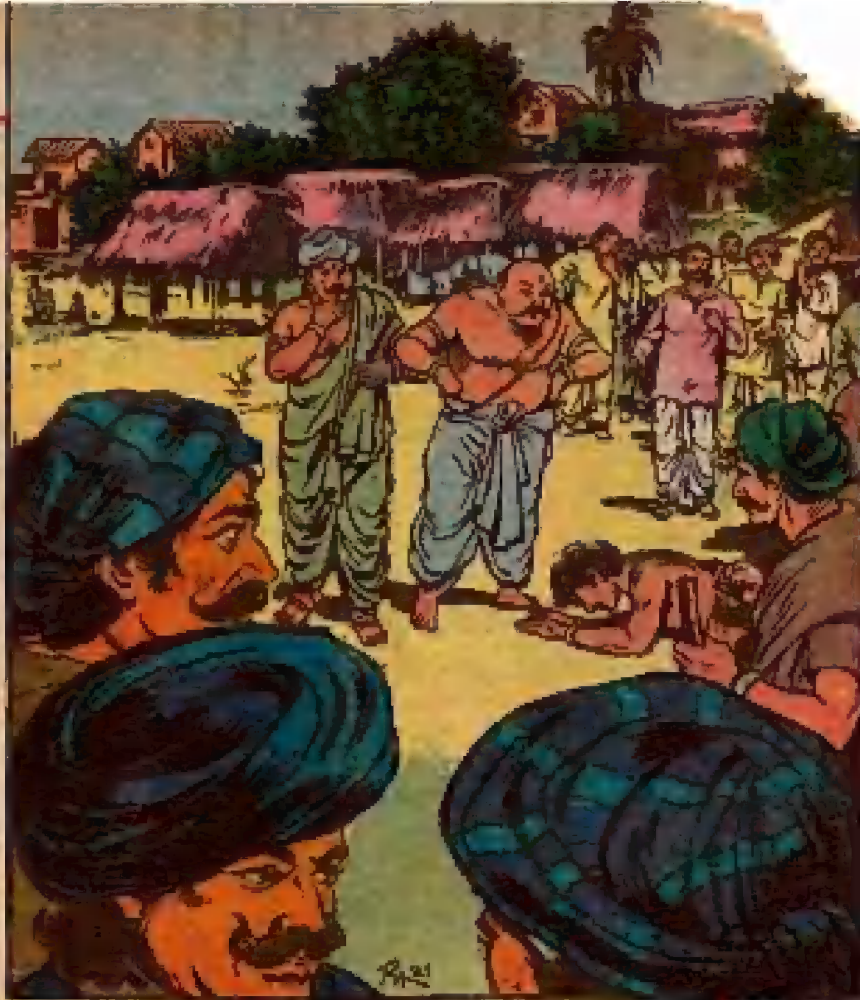
Visu ran from house to house and told the villagers, "Please forgive me and forget whatever grievance you have against me. Give me a chance to serve you honestly." He even waived some of his dues from his poorer customers. To others he promised concessions in the future.

The villagers took pity on Visu. They found that they were not going to benefit from Visu's misfortune. Since he was now repentant for his misdeeds, who knows if he won't be a better man in the future? They decided to come to his rescue.

Before the gathering Visu, with folded hands, told the minister, "Esteemed Sir, I'm not a bad chap. Once in a while I suffer from a fit. Only then I become rude. It is my disease that turns me into a temporary rogue!"

"Yes, sir, Visu is not lying. He suffers from fits and loses control over his speech and behaviour," some of the villagers said.

Suddenly a young man leaped forward and fell at Visu's feet.



He was Visu's servant.

"What's the matter with you?" asked the surprised Visu.

"My master! You slap me or plant blows on me almost every-day, don't you? And the words you use to chide me should put the devil to shame; am I not right? I must confess that lately I had decided to give a good thrashing to you, hiding in darkness! Never had I suspected that it is not you but your fit that is responsible for your cruelty. It was quite sinful of me to think of thrashing you. I am sorry!"

Visu did not know what to say. The villagers suppressed their laughter with some effort.



They knew Visu's servant to be naive and extremely innocent.

The boy then bowed to the minister and said, "Sir, for ten years my master is suffering from his fits—every day! Will you not kindly give him some medicine?"

The wise minister could easily grasp the servant's nature. He said gravely, "Very well, I'll give him some medicine. My man will meet you every Sunday and enquire of you whether the medicine is working on your master or not. You are the best person to report about it!"

Turning towards Visu, the minister said, "Henceforth you

are to sell only things that are genuine. Do you agree?"

"I agree."

"You must be courteous with all. Whether you are improving in your behaviour or not will be ascertained by my man from your servant. Is that all right?"

"Perfectly all right, sir."

The minister left the village. Visu was no more rude to anybody. His servant began telling all and sundry, "What a marvellous physician the minister is! He gave just one dose of some medicine to my master privately and that cured him of a disease that had remained with him for at least ten years!"

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STORY OF INDIA-84

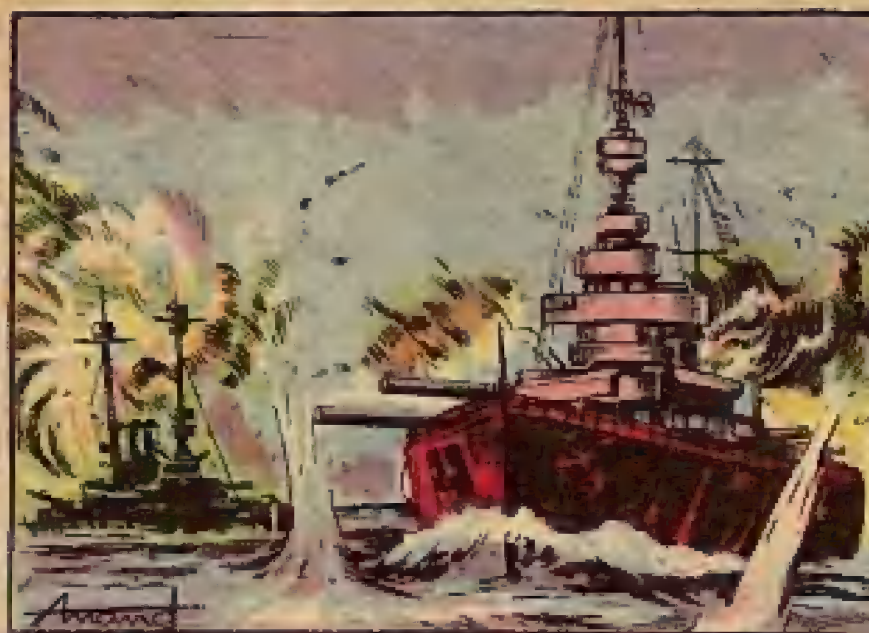
DAWN OF THE BRITISH RULE

By 15th century India had become the land of gold in European legends. The Italian navigator, Columbus, set out to discover a passage to India with the patronage of the Spanish king and queen. He discovered America in 1498 and till his death believed that he had reached India!

The Portuguese adventurer Vasco-da-Gama reached India the same year. He was received well by the Hindu King Zamorin of Calicut. It was he who opened the direct sea route between Europe and India. Soon came the Dutch, the Danes, the English and the French.

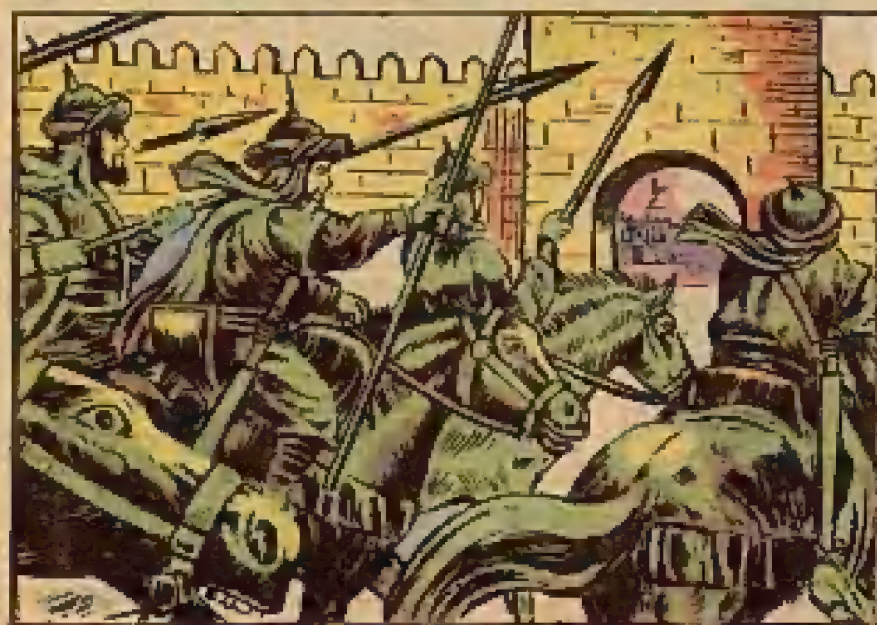
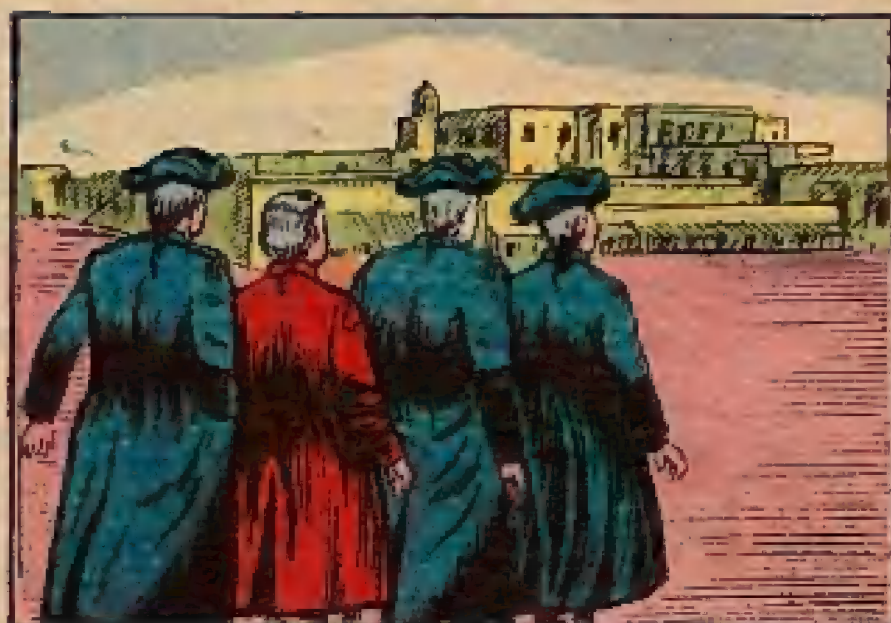


The two rivals who survived the others were the French and the English. The Marathas tried to unite the Indian kings against them, but their effort did not go far. The French and the English who came as merchants grew ambitious. They desired to become rulers of India and clashed with each other.



In South India the French were gaining ground under the leadership of Dupleix. Pondicherry was their chief seat of operation. In 1740 a war broke out in Europe. France and England were on opposite camps. Under its influence English and French ships fought between them off the South Indian coast.

But good luck was coming for the English in the person of a young man named Robert Clive who loved adventure. He was an unruly boy. He fled home and joined East India Company as a clerk when 18 years of age and was sent to Madras where the Company had built Fort St. George.



In Bengal the young Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula was against the growing English influence. From his capital at Murshidabad he attacked Calcutta, the East India Company's headquarters, and captured it. Fort William of the Company fell into his hands.

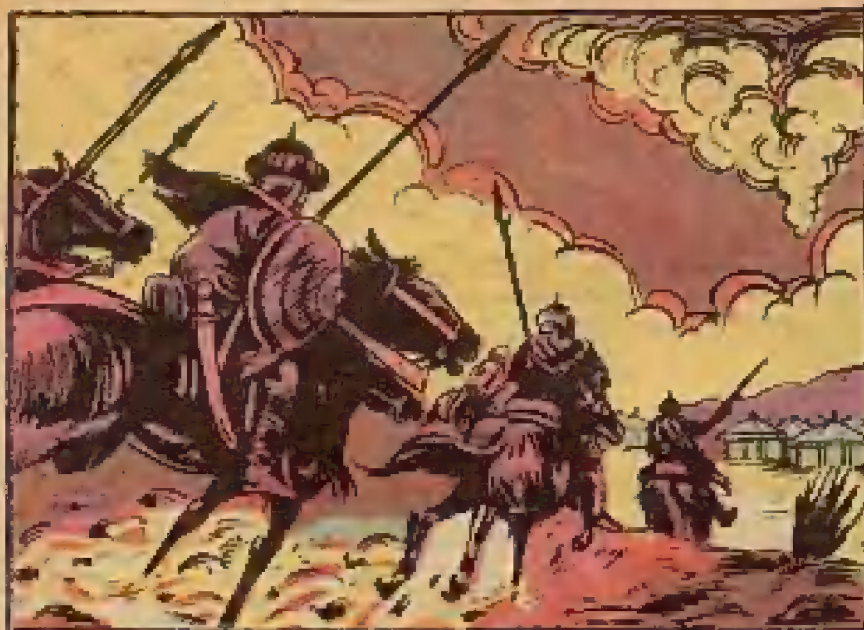
The news of the fall of Calcutta disheartened all Englishmen in India. Clive took the initiative to lead an army to Calcutta. He rescued Fort William. When Siraj-ud-Daula came to fight back the English, Clive made a treaty with him. The young Nawab went back to Murshidabad.



But as soon as Siraj left Calcutta, Clive conspired with his general, Mir Jafar, and promised him the throne. Then, under some flimsy pretext, he declared war against the Nawab. The battle took place at Plassey. The Nawab's treacherous general did not order his army to fight!

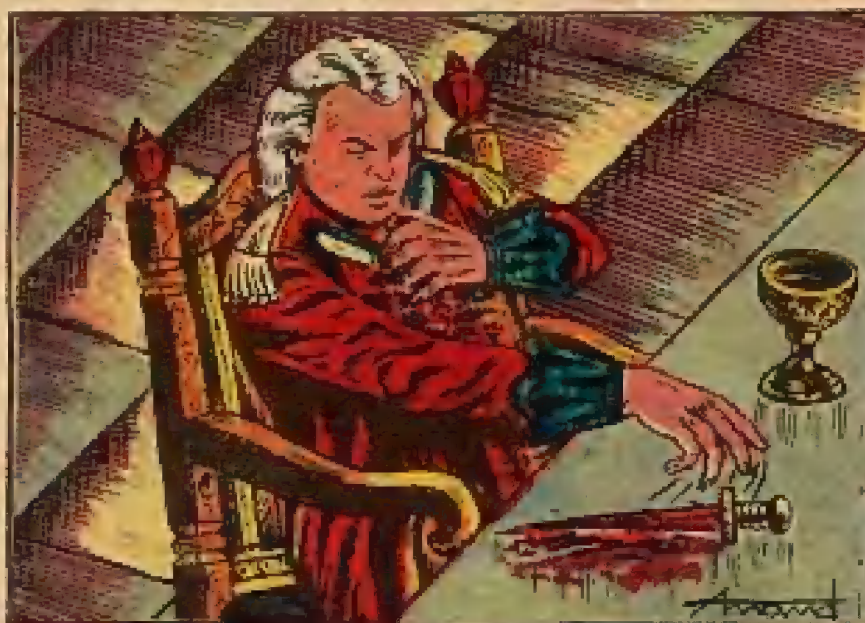
The Nawab was defeated. He was captured and brutally killed by Mir Jafar's men. Mir Jafar was made the Nawab. But the English began to suck away every pie he realised from his subjects. He had to pay crores of rupees to the company and lakhs to Robert Clive.





When Mir Jafar could not satisfy the English any longer, they threw him out and put his son-in-law Mir Quasim on the throne. He was independent-minded and unwilling to be servile to the British. Their differences resulted in the Buxar war of 1764. Mir Quasim was supported by Delhi's nominal Mughal king Shah Alam.

Mir Quasim was defeated. He fled and died in extreme poverty in Delhi. Clive who had gone back to England came back as Lord Clive and obliged the Mughal King to give him right to collect taxes from Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Clive made much money himself.



Clive returned to England expecting to be hailed as a hero. But he was attacked by many for his corruption, treachery and cruelty in India. Unable to bear this, he stabbed himself to death. But he had laid the basis for British rule in India.

HEAVEN AND HELL

The young seeker had impressed the guru very much. The guru decided to give him the mantra. That would initiate him to a spiritual life.

An auspicious hour was fixed. The young seeker prostrated himself to the guru. The guru blessed him. Both meditated for a while. Then the guru whispered the mantra in the disciple's ear.

"This mantra can lead one to heaven. Guard it in your memory and keep it a secret. Do not utter it in others' hearing," was

the guru's instruction.

The disciple was in ecstasy. We cannot say how much of the guru's instruction he heard.

The ritual was over. The young disciple rushed out to the open. He was looking inspired.

He saw a group of pilgrims walking along the road that passed by the temple. Promptly he climbed the high temple-wall and shouted, "Ho, pilgrims, come here!"

The pilgrims stopped and they inched closer to the temple-wall.



"Are you all devotees of the Lord?" asked the young sage. His face glowed with a light of compassion.

"We are," answered the pilgrims.

"Listen carefully, listen to this mantra. Recite it in your heart. Great will be the result," announced the young sage and he recited the mantra he had just learnt from his guru, loudly and in a vibrant tone.

Soon the report of what he was doing reached the guru. He came out and asked the disciple to come down. The young man obeyed him at once and came running to him.

"What are you doing? Did I not ask you to keep the mantra

a secret in your heart? Do you know the consequence of your violating the rule?" the guru asked sternly.

"What is the consequence, Master?" asked the disciple.

"Hell!"

The disciple smiled. "My master, you told me that the mantra could lead one to heaven. I have passed on the mantra to so many of those pilgrims. They will go to heaven. For sake of so many, I don't mind going to hell!"

The guru knew how sincere the young man was. He praised him for his love of mankind.

This young sage became famous as Ramanuja. He lived in 11th—12th century.



The Great Beast and His Party

A farmer had a pet lamb, unusually white, and they called it the Great Beast.

The festival was approaching. "I think this time we have to kill the Great Beast for the feast of the festival," the father-farmer told his sons.

"We can do that!" agreed the sons.

The lamb happened to hear this. He escaped at midnight and entered the forest.

"Who are you, all-white creature? Why are you running?"

asked the wild boar.

"I'm the Great Beast. They were going to kill me!"

"If they were going to kill the Great Beast, why on earth should they spare me?" said the boar and he followed the lamb.

"Hello, what's the matter with you?" asked the bull.

"He is the Great Beast and they were out to kill him. Imagine what they would do to small creatures like you and I!" explained the boar.

"Better I join you," said the





terrified bull:

They penetrated farther into the forest.

"Why is this mad rush please?" asked the monkey.

"Why not? If they were going to kill the Great Beast, what hope we had?" replied the bull.

"If you thought it wise to run, why should I be a fool to lag behind?" The monkey joined the group.

"I wonder what happened to these creatures," said the bear, raising his head from an ant-hill where he was having his breakfast too early.

"Stop wondering, sir! They were out to kill the Great Beast.

He is lucky to escape and we are lucky to join him," said the monkey.

"Good you told me." The bear forgot his early breakfast and followed the party.

Soon they located a house in the darkest part of the forest. There was light inside. They tiptoed close to it and saw a gang of robbers bringing jewels and gold coins out of a pit.

"Let's all shout at a time!" the lamb whispered to his companions.

And they opened their mouths at once. The lamb bleated, the boar grunted, the bull bellowed, the monkey chattered, and the bear growled. Together it made the strongest noise ever heard by anybody. The robbers jumped up and ran away. The Great Beast's party victoriously entered the house. They found a fat lot of food-stuffs stored by the robbers. They made judicious use of a part of it and then lay down—the lamb at the door, the boar at the centre, the bull and the bear near the wall and the monkey on the roof.

It was still dark when the chief of the robbers made bold to return and enter the house,

crawling. His hand touched the lamb. He took his hand away at once, but his legs touched the boar's head. The boar flung him towards the wall and he was between the bull's horn. Hardly had he come out of it than the bear took him in his grasp and hurled him out like a coconut. The robber chief ran and ran, but the monkey followed him, jumping from tree to tree and continued to slap him till he was back with his gang. Then the whole gang ran and ran till they were out of the forest. And once out of the forest, they fell into the hands of the royal guards who were looking for them for seven years!

"A strange creature has arrived in the forest. It is so big

that it occupies a whole house. It is hairy, as strong as a hillock and it can extend its hand up to a mile if it found a suitable object to slap on!" the chief told his captors.

The guards did not speak a word of it to anybody, because they wanted to give the impression to their king and all that they had captured the gang fighting it in its den in the forest.

The Great Beast's party continued in the forest house. The monkey carried handfuls of coins and jewels to some woodcutters who were good enough to bring bagfuls of food for them. The forest too did not lack in foodstuffs. They lived happily ever after!



An Example And A Lesson

Boys who lived with sage Yogananda and learnt their lessons from him were all very well-behaved and good-natured. Viraj, however, was quite different. He thought himself to be very wise and took all the other students to be fools. He bullied them and called them names and showed them his muscles on the slightest pretext. The boys avoided him as much as possible.

Viraj dared to do so because he was under the impression that the sage did not know of his behaviour.

One day, while taking a class, the sage asked the students, "What should be the conduct of the wise towards the foolish and the arrogant?"

As the students kept quiet, the sage said, "Why don't you answer? If a dog barks at a man, does the man bark back? No, the man avoids the dog—just as you avoid Viraj. Right?"

Viraj who was present hung his head. Thereafter his behaviour began to change—of course for the better!



A Fairy In The Forest

A fairy, who had never visited the earth, once descended on a hillock. She found the forest around the hillock very charming.

She wandered in the forest enjoying the shade given by the huge trees and the fragrance of many kinds of flowers.

Soon a bear attracted her attention. She thought, "How bizarre this creature looks!" and she approached it.

Now, we must inform you that this particular fairy had the

power to change any ugly creature into a beautiful one, provided the creature wished to change. And she was in no doubt that the bear would like to become handsome.

She said, "Good day to you, Mr. Hairy!"

"Good day, Miss Fairy!"

"Well, Mr. Hairy, I have the power to make any creature beautiful!" said the fairy, sure that the bear would jump with joy at the hint and request her to make him beautiful.



"Have you?" asked the bear.
"That is fine. May I request you to apply your power and make my neighbour, the pig, a bit beautiful? I feel so ashamed to have him next to my lodge!"

The fairy felt rather disappointed. But she said nothing and proceeded to meet the pig.

"Hello, Mr. Pig, I can make any creature beautiful, you know!"

"Can you? Will you please apply your power on that monkey who lives in this tree? My morning begins with a sight of him and I feel so bad about it!" said the pig showing to the fairy the monkey who was munching a guava a little farther away.

"Hellow, Mr. Monkey, it is good thing to look charming..." began the fairy, this time changing the style of her approach.

The monkey eyed her meaningfully and said, "I knew some day or the other somebody will grow curious to know the secret of my beauty. To tell the truth, I inherited it from my parents. I have no power to keep you grow beautiful like me. I am sorry!"

The monkey jumped onto another tree and vanished from the fairy's sight.

The fairy went back to her land. And I must tell you that she looked not only amused, but also quite puzzled!



THE WRONG WAY

Chandrasekhar was the chieftain of the village. The position was hereditary in olden days.

He had two sons and both were known to be good-natured. Chandrasekhar was at a loss to decide who should succeed him as the chieftain.

One day while he was discussing his problem with a close friend of his, his elder son came in and said, "Father, I'm going to see the festival with my friend Ravi."

"Is your younger brother not going?" asked Chandrasekhar.

"He too is going, but he is taking to the King's highway. We are taking to a shortcut through the jungle," replied the elder son.

"But is that road not rather risky?" asked the father.

"It is; but Ravi insists on taking to that shortcut."

"You may go, but be on your guard," said the father.

After the young man left the friend told Chandrasekhar, "One who takes to a wrong way, simply because of a friend's insistence, is not fit for the position of a chieftain even though he is good-natured. Better choose the younger son to succeed you." Chandrasekhar agreed.



PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Mr. Devdas Kaskbekar



Mr. B. Prasad

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs.50/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for October '83 goes to:—

Mr. S.N. Awachat, Indian Globe Chambers,

(Telecom Accounts), 5th floor, Fort, Bombay—400 001

The Winning Entry:—'Sweet Gesture'—'Baffling Structure'

PICKS FROM THE WISE

"There is no cure for birth and death save to enjoy the interval."

—George Santayana

"Nothing, not all the armies of the world, can stop an idea whose time has come."

—Victor Hugo

"What is mind? No matter. What is matter? Never mind."

—Thomas H. Key

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It was Raju's little sister Meena's birthday. It was a grand occasion for Raju. Nandu, Vinay, Rekha, Ashok all were to come with beautiful presents.

Raju couldn't think of a gift. He wanted to present something very very very special.

He thought and thought and thought. Suddenly he hit upon an idea.

A mask, a beautiful colourful mask. Green stripes on the cap, pink on the cheeks, crimson lips.

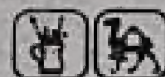
With dashes of paint in no time he painted a mask on a piece of cardboard and cut it into shape.

What a colourful present: Meena was delighted.

Everyone talked about Raju and his wonderful present.

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